

THE EFFECT OF DIFFERENT PAPER SURFACES ON THE
DEVELOPMENT OF FINISHED COLLAGES

Problem in Lieu of Thesis

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF FINE ARTS

By

Rebecca Anne Best, B. A., B. F. A.

Denton, Texas

December, 1978

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Origin of the Study

For the past five years, collage techniques have been an important part of the art work I produce. My initial experience with cut and pasted paper was somewhat accidental. During my studies at the Tyler School of Art in Rome, I was attracted to Italian bookbinding papers and began to use them as decorative borders around my lithographic prints. My enjoyment of working with different types of paper led to the full use of collage elements over the entire picture plane. I have become increasingly aware that the paper surface chosen for a collage is the basis for all other decisions in the collage-making process. Because of its important influence, this project concentrated on analyzing the affects that the surface paper has on four series of collages.

Statement of the Problem

The problem of this study will be to provide information on the degree of influence exerted by the choice of ground in the selection of collage elements and the final development of each collage.

Procedures for Implementation of the Study

The information collected is of a subjective nature and was recorded in a journal while the collages were in process. Seven different papers ranging from yellow white to blue white, rough to smooth, opaque to translucent was selected. Four drawing compositions were developed and used as points of departure for four series of collages. Each of the four compositions were developed on the seven different surfaces to produce twenty-eight collages. The collage elements in the fourth series were kept constant on all seven surfaces. During the development of the collages, notes were taken informally regarding reactions to the papers, decision making processes, and overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the results. Upon completion of the twenty-eight collages, each set of four collages completed on a particular paper surface were analyzed in chart form for common responses to the ground paper.

CHAPTER II

PRESENTATIONS AND ANALYSES OF THE COLLAGES

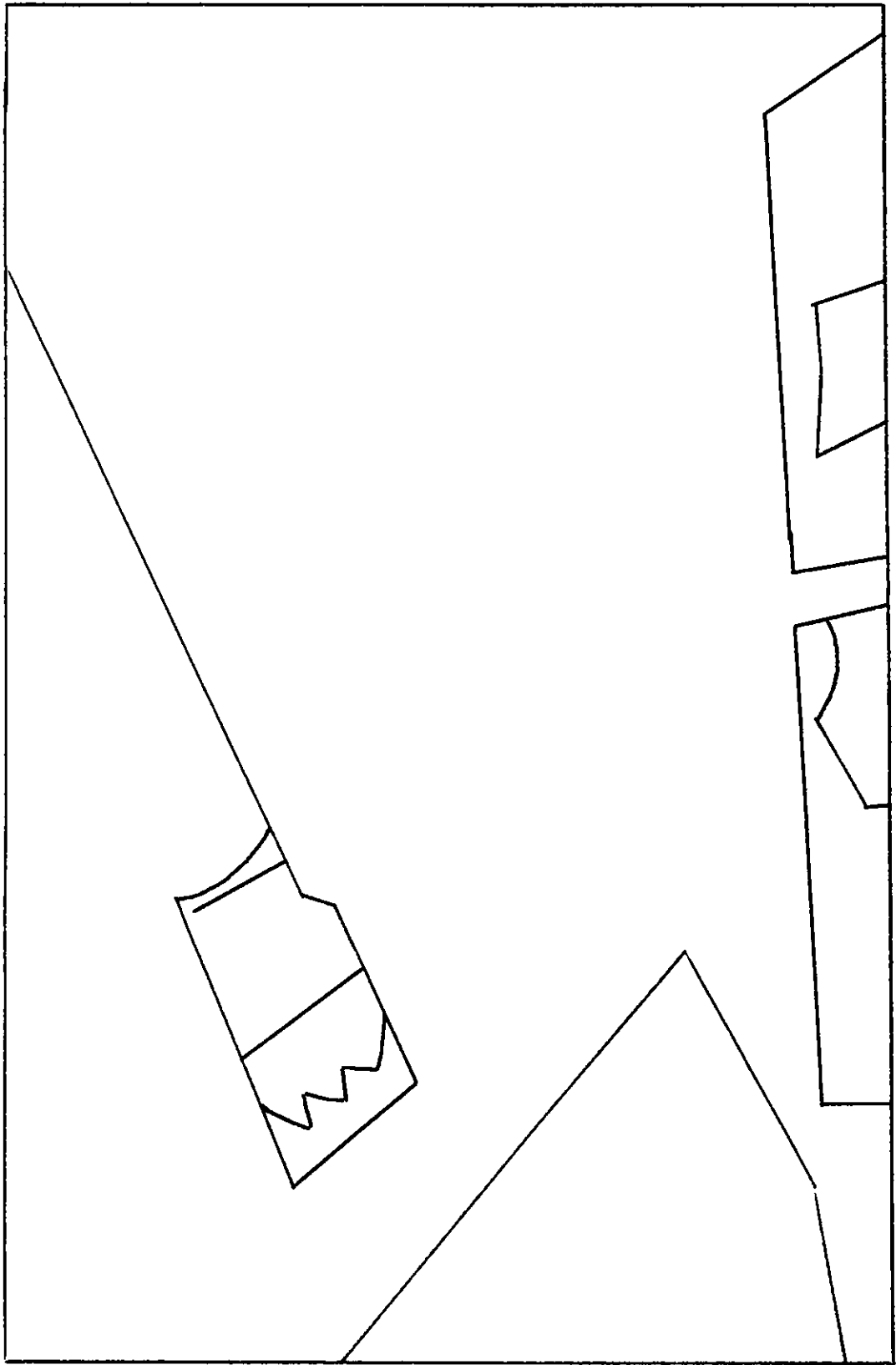
Description of the Drawings

The four drawing compositions used in this project were selected from twelve different drawing ideas. Selection was based on their strength and variety of compositions. For example, the drawing for series one is concentrated mainly along the edges of the picture space. A broom like shape is caught before it sweeps across the open space in the center of the composition. The drawing for series two consists of large shapes that fill almost the entire picture space. There is a narrative attitude present. Series three has a narrow horizontal drawing consisting of many small pointed shapes. It offers a festive mood in the group of four drawings. The three shapes in drawing four appear to move and float within an open space leaving much of the surface paper showing. Illustrations of the four drawings are shown on the following four pages.

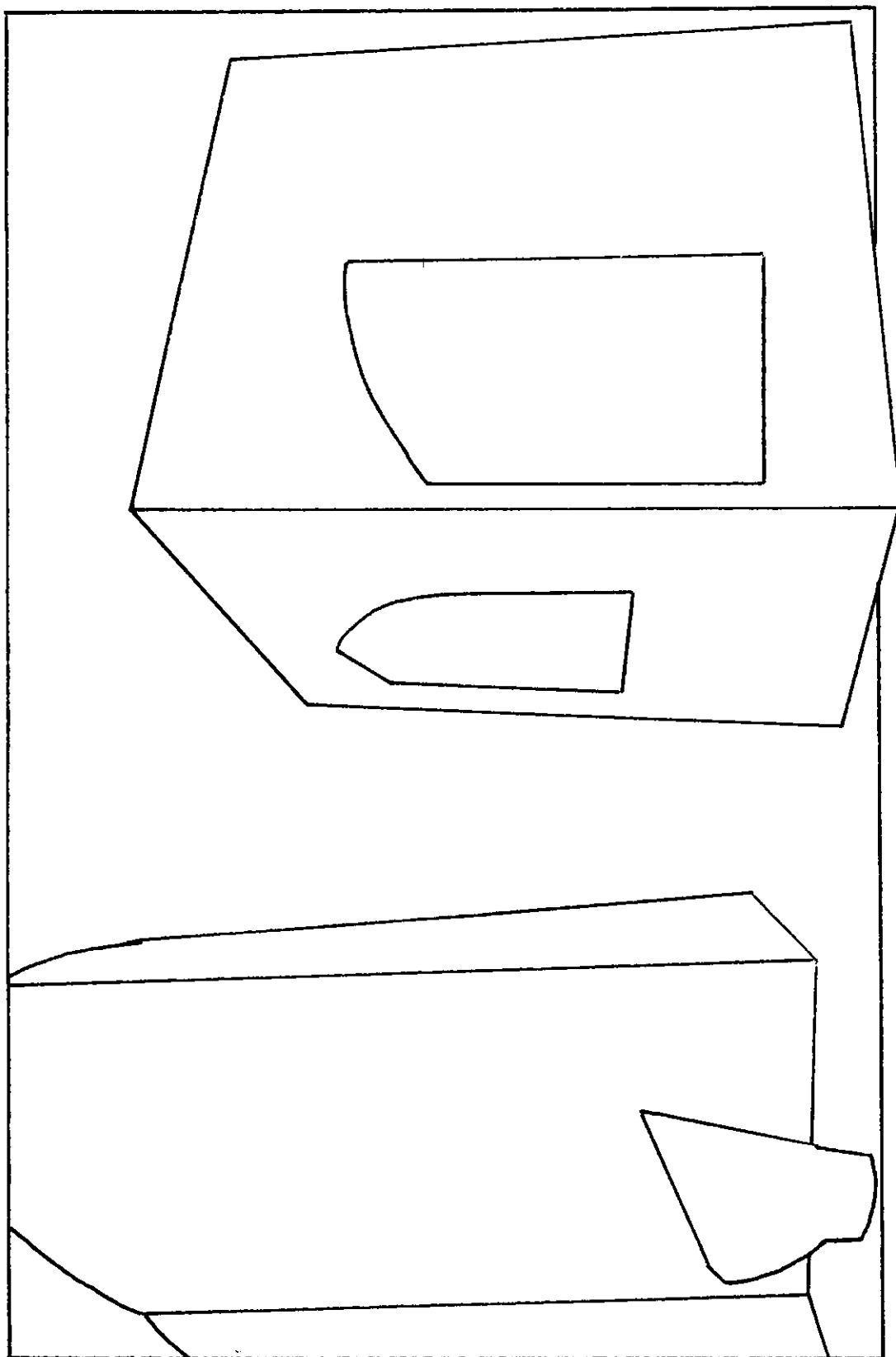
Description of the Charts

Charts have been structured to show clearly the influence of each particular type of paper surface. An initial chart catalogs the paper surfaces on a continuum related to

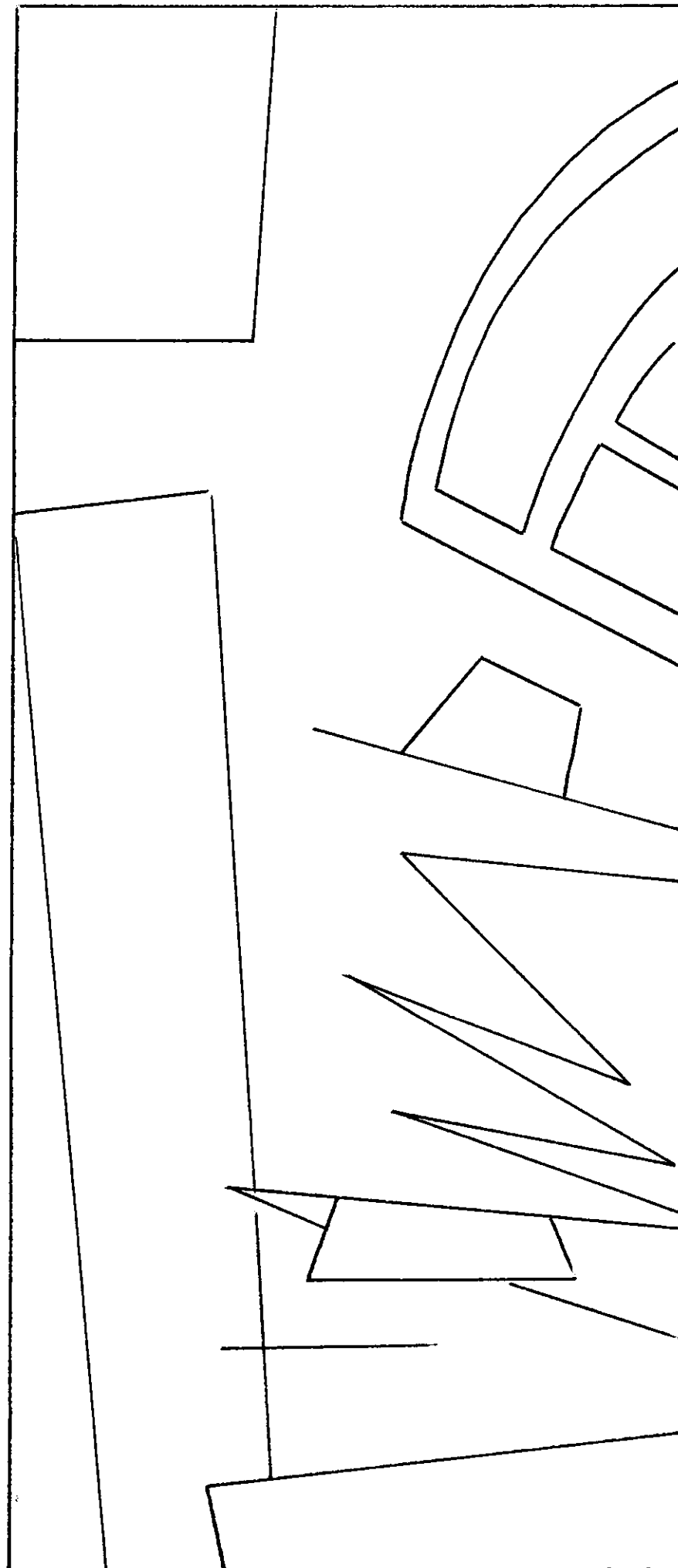
DRAWING FOR SERIES I



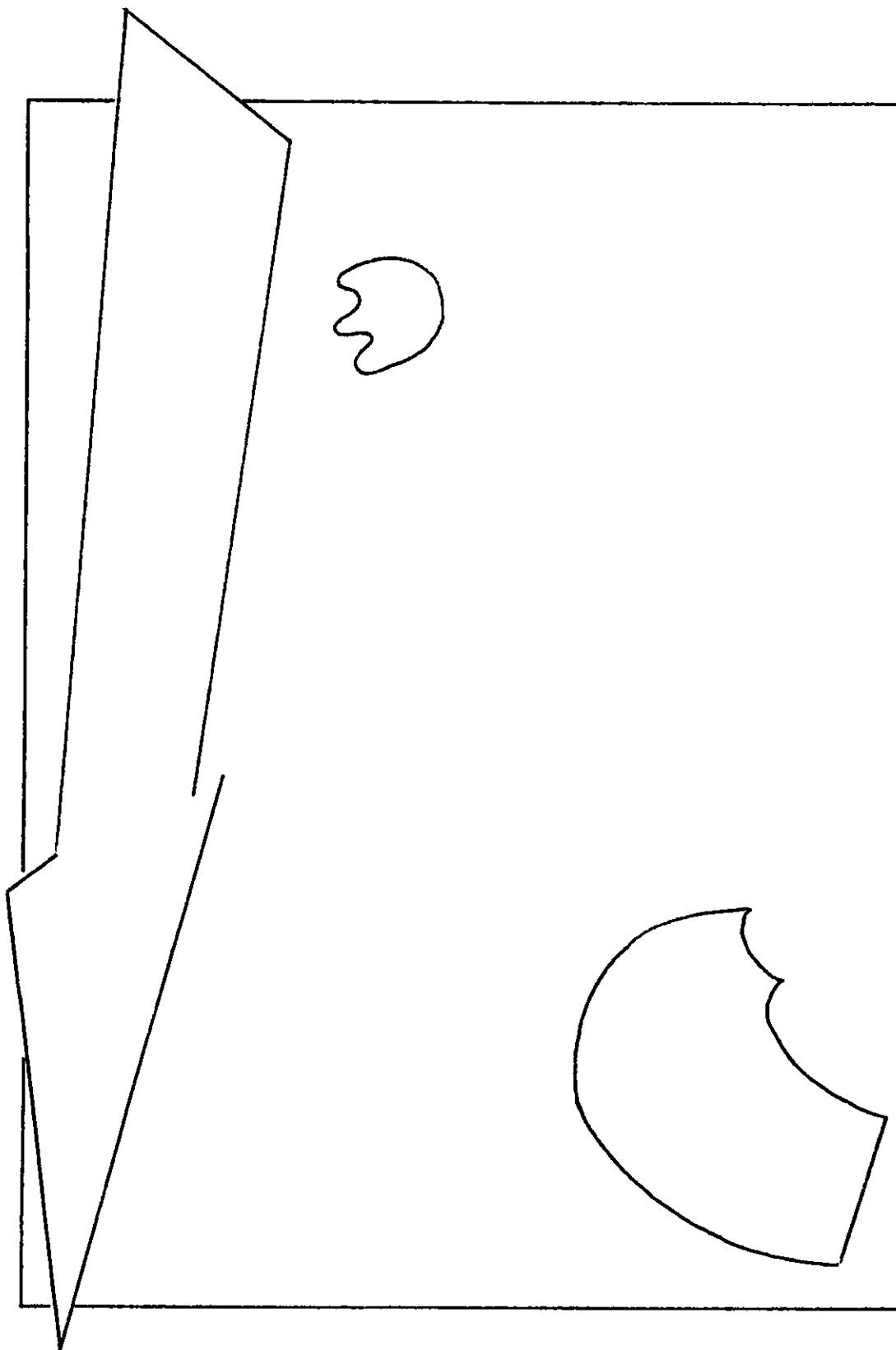
DRAWING FOR SERIES II



DRAWING FOR SERIES III



DRAWING FOR SERIES IV



the values of white, the visual textures, and the translucence. All other charts represent one of the seven paper surfaces. The type of paper is named and pictured. The four collages developed on the paper surface represented by that chart are analyzed in four separate columns. The columns are entitled Series I, Series II, Series III, and Series IV. Under each title the illustration number of the collage being discussed is given. The illustrations are grouped in slide form following the conclusions of this paper. The four columns are divided into three categories of information. The section lettered A continues the discussion of the influence of the surface color on the art elements chosen for the collage. The influence of the paper's visual texture is represented in the B section. Analysis of the affect of the paper's degree of translucence is under letter C. There is a general summary of the charts in the Summary and Conclusions section of this paper.

PAPERS

Paper surfaces are rated on a continuum of one to seven in relation to the values of white, the visual textures, and the translucence.

Type of Paper	Yellow White (1)- Blue White (7)	Rough Texture (1)- Smooth Texture (7)	Opaque (1)- Translucent (7)
Rag Vellum over Wrapping Paper	1	1	4
Frankfurt	2	5	1
Kitakata over Chiri	3	2	5
Okawara	4	6	3
Hosho	5	7	2
Unryu	6	3	6
Vellum Grid	7	4	7

CHART I

Type of paper surface: Vellum over wrapping paper.

Series I Illustration No. 4	Series II Illustration No. 8	Series III Illustration No. 14	Series IV Illustration No. 21
<p>A. Color</p> <p>Orange-yellow white is hot, burning. Choice of collage elements try to compete with background's intensity e.g., orange of small square shape.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Right pattern on triangular shape complements background. Cut lines allow basket weave pattern to surface as an added collage element.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Opaque surface flattens collage.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Intense yellow to orange colored lines lay on top of paper surface. Equally intense colors are chosen for collage shapes.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Basket weave background calls for more textured elements e.g., large rectangle on right, small pointed shape on left.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Translucent vellum allows large rectangle to show from behind it, but opaque wrapping paper flattens picture space.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Collage elements are pure, saturated colors.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Busy patterned blue paper moves out from surface.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Small rectangle is cut out of translucent vellum to balance right side of composition, emphasize underlying wrapping.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Solid, bright colored shapes are intensified on hot basket weave surface paper.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Basket weave overall, tight pattern. Acts as a contrast to solid shapes.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Three shapes exist on top of surface.</p>

CHART II

Type of paper surface: Frankfort

Series I Illustration No. 1	Series II Illustration No. 9	Series III Illustration No. 20	Series IV Illustration No. 21
<p>A. Color</p> <p>Creamy yellow color of surface paper suggests mood of a Saturday summer morning. Colors chosen for collage elements are similar in value, intensity. Small, lavender square shape is a spot of shade for resting.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Zig zag line on broom shape, small square echos easy mood.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Paper surface is opaque, flat even though broom shape could sweep across picture space.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Surface color is reminiscent of Calder's cut-paper sun. Collage is monochromatic. Only changes in value are caused by cast shadows from relief pieces.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Each cut shape is distinguished by a change in direction of subtle paper grain.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Opaque paper is used in a relief design.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Yellow stip at top chosen in response to yellowness of surface paper. Browns were likewise chosen. White areas contrast with background, bring out its full color.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Rib like lines on rounded shape echo paper grain.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Collage is saturated, flat, heavy.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Light yellow arrow fades into cream colored background. Red, green shapes have their intensity lessened.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Subtle grain of surface paper is not influential factor.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Picture space is flat.</p>

CHART III

Type of paper surface: Kitakata Over Chiri

Series I Illustration No. 6	Series II Illustration No. 10	Series III Illustration No. 15	Series IV Illustration No. 21
<p>A. Color</p> <p>Surface paper reads as a definite brown color with grayish brown spots. Black is not a usual choice to accompany brown, but gradations of gray appear to work well with bark spots.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Spots of texture were difficult to relate to at first. Has become one of favored surfaces.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>There is some depth. Receding movements are caused by fuzzy appearance of various sized bark chips under translucent Kitakata paper.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Kitakata layed over collage element looks like a sepia-washed photo of a dream image.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Chiri background paper has been covered by collage elements except for quarter inch around picture space. Grayish brown spots in border add to old world effect.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Delicate, thin, translucent Kitakata paper is used as a vale over narrative image that is reminiscent of a Sassetta painting.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Brown of surface paper influences choice of color for long top strip. Other collage elements are chosen in relation to colors of brown in it.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>General ease of relationships among elements on a favorite surface.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Cut Kitakata paper to allow Chiri paper to show through to make a stronger statement.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Colors of shapes, brown of background do not work well together.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Finish on different papers do not go together.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Shapes seem to exist on different level of atmosphere above surface paper.</p>

CHART IV

Type of paper surface: Okawara

Series I Illustration No. 7	Series II Illustration No. 11	Series III Illustration No. 19	Series IV Illustration No. 21
<p>A. Color</p> <p>Do not know why surface is completed covered by another paper. Okawara is one of least favorite surfaces</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>See A.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>See A.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Color is bland; looks like oatmeal. Surface is covered a second time.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Paper surface is too fibrous. Covered it with another strongly grained paper. Maybe fiber in original paper has unconscious influence on choice of second textured paper.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Heavy opaque paper surface has blocked ideas, forced them away.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Paper reads as unbleached Indian linen. Strip at top from Indian miniature.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>All rice papers used in this project are part of collage. They are like swatches of cloth sewn into original surface fabric.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Surface paper is heavy, cloth like.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Red, green shapes appear above surface. Light yellow shape fades into it.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Large areas of background paper showing reveals rough fibrous quality of surface paper.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>See A.</p>

CHART V

Type of paper surface: Hosho

Series I Illustration No. 2	Series II Illustration No. 13	Series III Illustration No. 16	Series IV Illustration No. 21
<p>A. Color</p> <p>Hosho paper is stark, pure white like snow. Its cold white calls for chilled blue shapes. Even red, orange appear cool within sharp exactness of their shapes' edges.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Lower right rectangle pictures mood of crushed snow. Surface white is smooth; collage elements are slick.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Saturated, opaque white stops eye. All that needs to be known this moment is in collage.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Pure white calls for pure black. After first black/white element is chosen all other decisions follow to complete narrative of collage.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Limited to shades of black/white integration of textures is a major consideration.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>There is depth in narrative landscape of finished collage.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Surface white calls for display of whites.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Overall texture is created by different values of white.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Real space is achieved through relief. Colors, different levels of relief pop in, out like player piano.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Truest display of colors is on white, white surface paper.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>All papers used are smooth. Surface paper, yellow shape are matte. Red, green shapes are shiny.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Colored shapes lie on white, opaque surface.</p>

CHART VI

Type of paper surface: Unryu

Series I Illustration No. 5	Series II	Series III Illustration No. 18	Series IV Illustration No. 21
<p>A. Color</p> <p>Values of white are chosen to join white, white surface paper.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Threads in paper surface are intimidating. So strong are they that they read as collage elements that have been placed on surface by someone else.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Collage is flat. Looks like design made with thin cloth.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Perplexed by surface paper. Did not do collage on it from this drawing.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Lavender strip is first color chosen for soft white surface.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Swirling threads in Unryu paper resemble marble. Not having marble designed paper, line patterned strip at top is chosen. Other paper follows in response to it. Then surface paper is basically ignored.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Collage elements sit on top of semi-translucent surface.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Clear, white of paper emphasizes colored shapes.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>White threads in paper swirl shapes around.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Shapes float, move within picture space.</p>

CHART VII

Type of surface paper: Vellum Grid

Series I Illustration No. 3	Series II Illustration No. 12	Series III Illustration No. 17	Series IV Illustration No. 21
<p>A. Color</p> <p>Surface paper is clean white, fresh, casual, easy. Grid is reminiscent of a plaid shirt which had yellow in it. Yellow for triangular shape is first color choice. Other yellow, blue shapes support easy going mood of grid.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Lines of grid call for clean shape edges. Shape papers also are lined.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Grid flattens picture space.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Primary colors outline shapes. Saturated black/white chosen to make strong statement.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>This particular drawing on grid look like architectural plan. All collage elements contain lines.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Picture space is flat.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Blue of grid lines influences blue color for collage elements. Black/white choices are for narrative statement.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>Lines on collage elements repeat grid lines.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Shapes lie on top of grid. Perspective had a vantage point above picture plane.</p>	<p>A. Color</p> <p>Blue/white of surface paper enhance color of shapes.</p> <p>B. Texture</p> <p>See C.</p> <p>C. Translucence</p> <p>Grid is flat surface. Shapes hang away from background.</p>

CHAPTER III

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

To summarize the chart analyses, I will state the strongest influences that each paper surface exerted on my decision making and on the finished collages. Overall satisfaction and dissatisfaction of the works will be apparent.

The VELLUM OVER WRAPPING PAPER, being the most intense yellow white, caused equally intense colors to be chosen for the collage elements. Bright red, orange, and yellow shapes were used for all four drawings. The strong basket weave visual texture flattened the picture space. The shapes appeared to sit on top of the surface. The background's opaqueness stops the eye as if confronting a brick wall.

The FRANKFURT PAPER is a less intense cream white. The color suggests a definite easy-going kind of mood. It brought to consciousness pleasant memories. I responded with other colors from those past places. For example, the cream yellow reminded me of Calder's sun, so I cut the paper making a shallow relief. The grain of the paper was turned to show a different direction on each cut piece. In drawing

one it emphasizes the sweeping motion of the broom shape. The opaqueness of the paper leaves a flat picture space.

I experienced great difficulty relating to the OKAWARA surface paper. In two series I completely covered the surface with another paper. The color seemed pale and sickly, the texture was fibrous and solidly opaque. In the third series I approached it as cloth and integrated the elements as though they were sewn into it.

KITAKATA OVER CHIRI was delightfully delicate. The brownish color gave the effect of a sepia wash to each collage. The mood was melancholly and suggestions of dream images could be carefully tucked under the translucent Kitakata paper. The spots of bark on the Chiri paper added to the antique quality. There is a shallow depth in which the eye can travel back and forth in between the elements.

The stark, pure whiteness of the HOSHO PAPER called for other dense, saturated colored elements. The matte opaque quality of the paper froze the statement of each collage. All that needs to be known about the collage is there to be seen.

The strong white threads in the otherwise translucent UNRYU PAPER were difficult to deal with. I felt that another person had put down collage elements on the surface before I arrived. The first collage was achieved only by ignoring the threads. The second collage was never finished because of

the paper's perplexity. The third drawing began by using a paper that had equally strong lines on it. The translucent blue whiteness of the paper is beautiful within itself and does not need to be added to.

The blue white VELLUM GRID is clinical and precise. The drawings sat on the surface like mechanical designs. The rigid lines of the grid set a mood for clean, sharp edges around the shapes. More line elements were used on this paper than on any other. The picture space is flat. The grid can not be penetrated.

Series four shows clear evidence of the importance of the surface papers. In this series the same green, yellow, and red collage shapes were placed in the same positions on each type of paper surface. No effort was made to respond to the color, texture, or translucence of the grounds. As a result, the color and textures of the collage elements do not integrate with the surfaces. They look like foreign objects in an alien space. So unsuccessful was this series of seven collages that only one has been illustrated to represent the others.

In general, the more opaque and textured the surface paper the flatter the picture space. The more translucent and smooth the paper surface the more atmospheric it appeared. Certain papers became my favorites; others were uninteresting. I will probably continue working with the Kitakata, Chiri,

Frankfurt, and Hosho papers; I expect to avoid the Okawara, Unryu, and Vellum over wrapping papers.

Additional Observations

There have been some important insights about my work that I have discovered during this project. Even though the surface papers have been the major influence for choosing the collage elements, who I was on a given day also greatly influenced the decisions I made. My mood, the weather, the present events of my life, the past experiences I recalled all affected the choices I made that day. By having to repeat the same drawing composition seven times in a series, I quickly realized that it is the designing of the composition in the collage-making process that I enjoy the most. However, not being able to make a new drawing for each new collage, I discovered that there are numerous collage possibilities for solving one drawing composition. I was forced to be more consciously aware of my choices in regard to color, visual texture, and translucence. For the first time in my work I was held accountable, so to speak, for how and why I chose the elements I did. Writing in the journal brought to consciousness the process of developing ideas that before I had passed off as intuitive actions. Working physically close to these collages over the extended length of time, I realized that they are viewed and studied most effectively up close. If I want to make more of a quick,

short impression with my work, I will need to work larger and bolder. The end result of this project is a more conscious understanding of and greater sensitivity to the decisions made during the collage-making process.



















